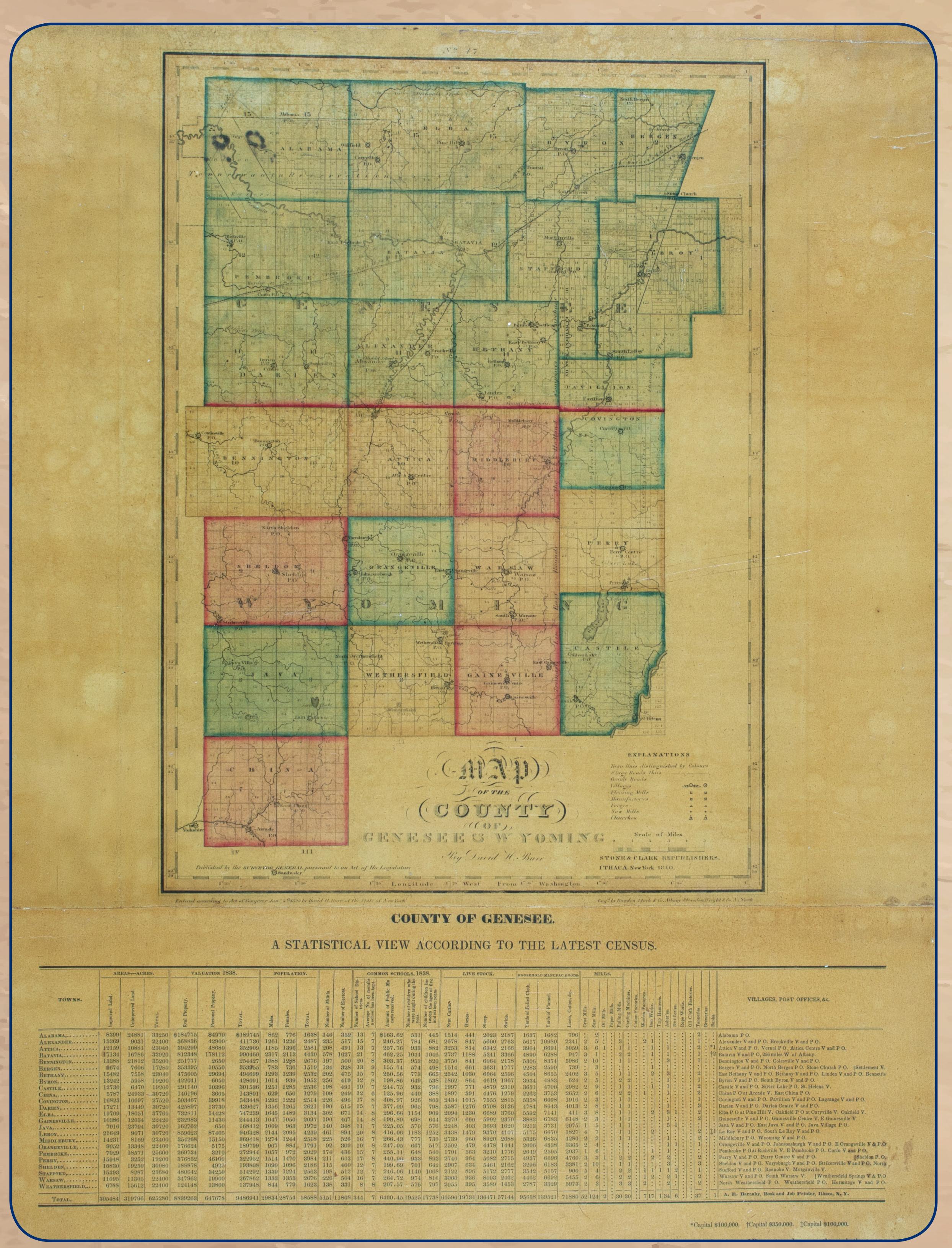
Rural Communities in New York State c.1

c.1840s

After the Treaty of Big Tree in 1797, a group of Dutch investors known as the Holland Land Company took control of about 3 million acres of land west of the Genesee River. The company spent the next three years surveying the land. Surveyor Joseph Ellicott relocated the company's main land office to Batavia in 1802. The company encouraged growth by donating land for churches, mills, and taverns to foster communities, spur development, and raise property values.



A census map of Genesee County, 1840.

Genesee County - 1840



The Toll Road shown west of Batavia is now State Route 5, stretching across the center of New York. Tonawanda Railroad, one of the earliest chartered railroads, opened its line between Batavia and Rochester in 1837. Five years later it would extend to Attica and later, Buffalo, eventually merging into the New York Central system. Statistics list 344 schools and 58,588 residents.

COUNTY OF GENESEE. A STATISTICAL VIEW ACCORDING TO THE LATEST CENSUS. ***AREA—ACREA.*** ***POPERATION.*** ***AREA—ACREA.*** ***POPERATION.*** ***AREA—ACREA.*** ***AREA—ACREA.***

Between 1840 and 1855 the population of Alabama grew from 1,638 to 2,194. As of 2010, the population was 1,881.

Woman's Property Rights Act - 1848

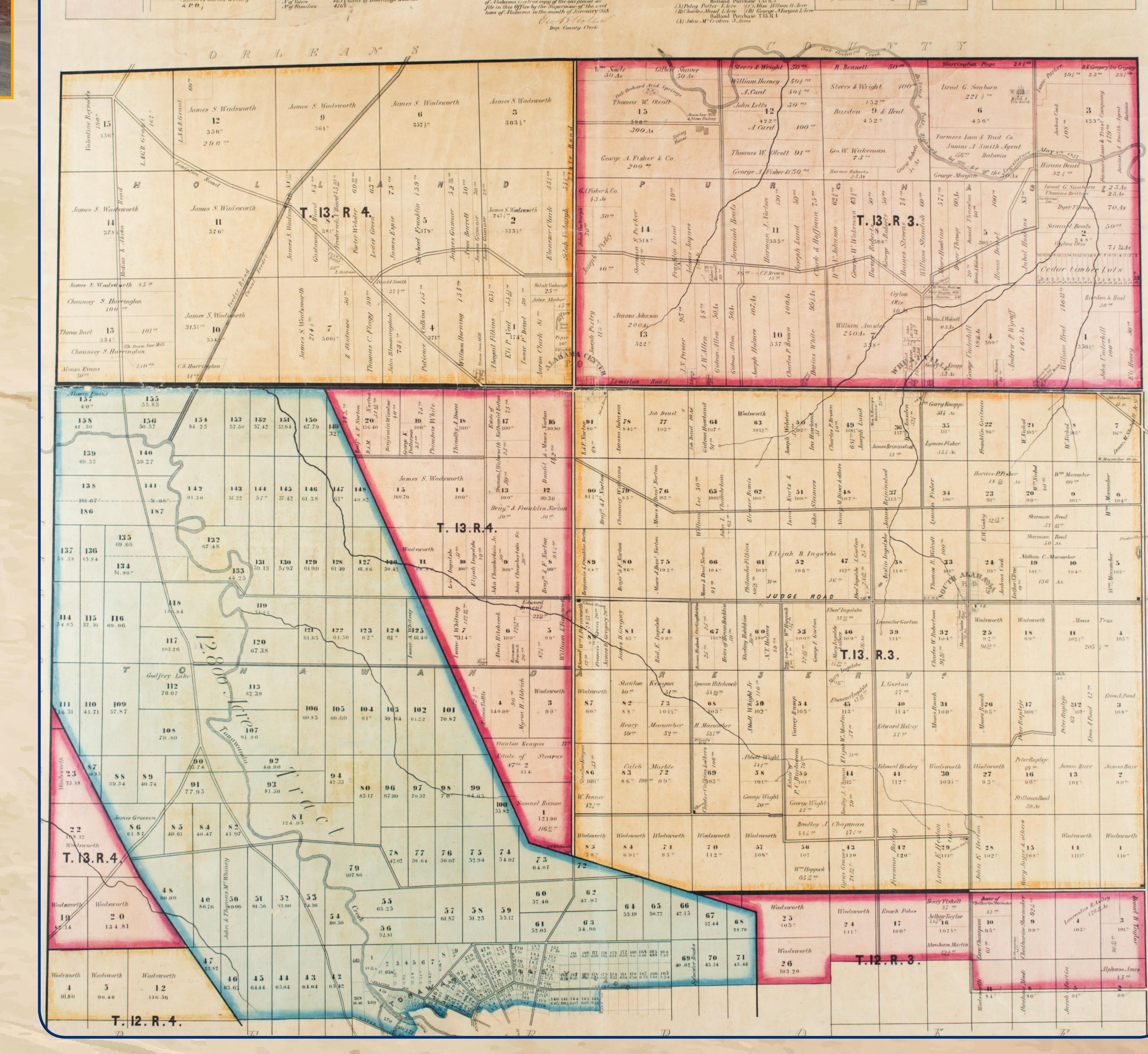
In 1848, 44 married women from Genesee and Wyoming counties created a petition to the state Legislature in support of a bill to allow married women to inherit property. The petition used the Declaration of Independence as a basis for their arguments. In April 1848, the Legislature passed the first married woman's property act. The passage of this act inspired many women to join the suffrage movement.

Town of Alabama - 1857

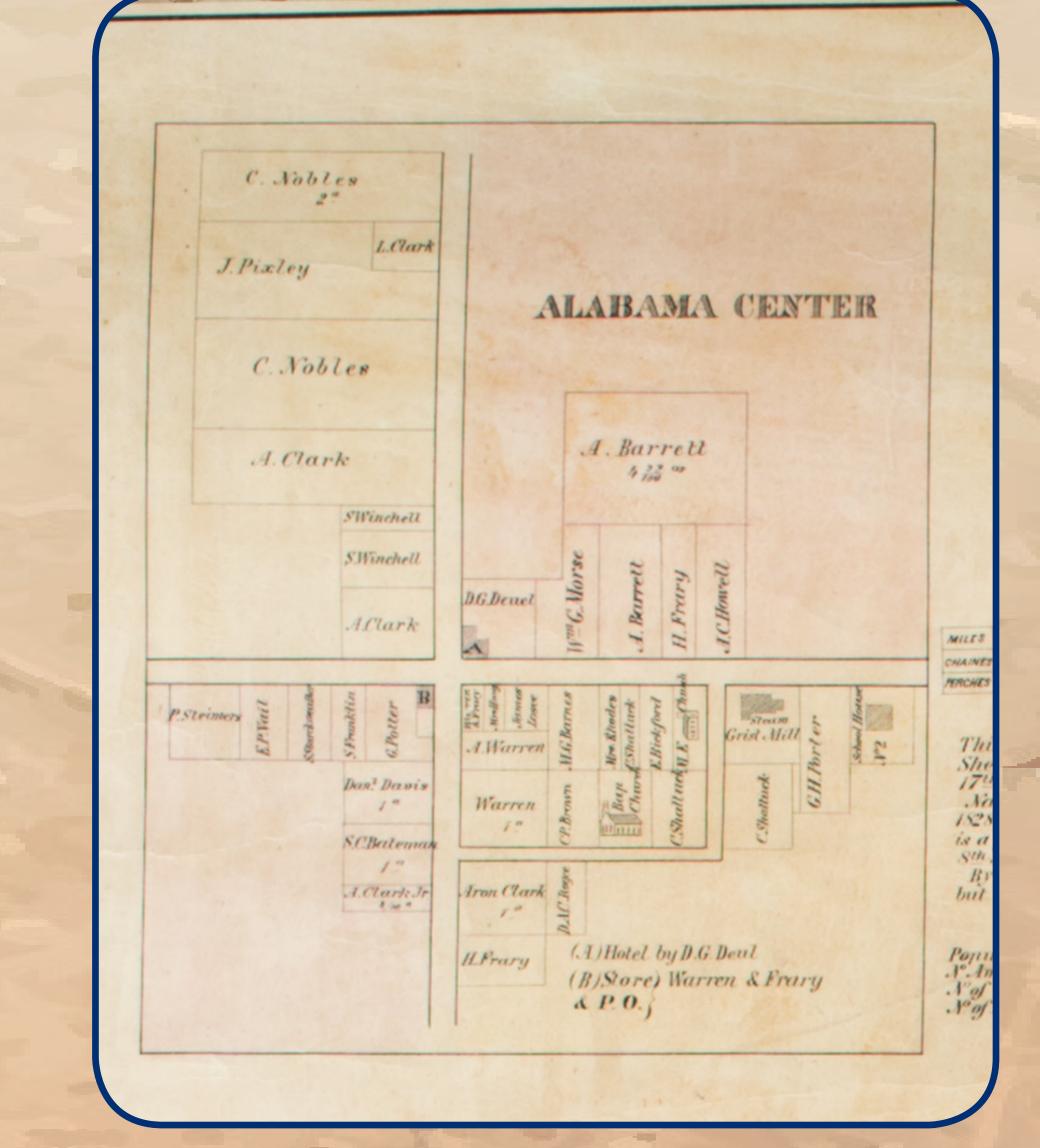


Alabama town center, looking west, August 2015.
Courtesy Google Street View.

A. E. Barnaby, Book and Job Printer, Ithaca, N. Y.



Genesee County, N.Y.



The town of Alabama formed in 1826, just one year after the nearby Erie Canal's completion. A canal feeder line is seen in the northeast section of the town. The surveyor general suggested the canal's route, and a saw mill and grist mill were built along Oak Orchard Creek by 1813.

Note the Oak Orchard Acid Springs in the northern part of town. Promoters advertised the high levels of sulphuric acid in the water as a medicinal cure-all and sold it by the bottle. Thomas W. Olcott, a wealthy investor from Albany, bought the surrounding land and built a hotel. In Albany, Olcott's son would eventually construct and become the original resident of what is now the Governor's Executive Mansion.

In the southern end of town, energy from the Tonawanda Falls in what is now the hamlet of Indian Falls encouraged the development of more mills, then farms, homes, churches, and schools along the Onondaga Escarpment.